

Sustainable Sharon Coalition

c/o Silas Fyler
48 Highland St.
Sharon, MA 02067

April 6, 2012

Ms. Kathleen Baskin, P.E.
Director of Water Policy
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Ms. Baskin,

Thank you for providing an opportunity for public comment on the Sustainable Water Management Initiative (SWMI) framework, and the issue of safe yield withdrawal limits for the major watersheds in Massachusetts.

Sustainable Sharon Coalition is a group of Sharon citizens concerned about various aspects of environmental sustainability, including management of our vital and finite water resources. We believe effective management of these water resources should be a collaborative effort among local communities, regional watershed groups and state authorities.

Sharon has achieved remarkable success with water conservation, reducing its water use by 20% since 2005. This improvement resulted in part from grants provided by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, as well as assistance from the Neponset River Watershed Association, for which we are most grateful. This is an outstanding example of cooperation at all levels to achieve a shared goal of water use efficiency, and proves that we can restore balance between human and environmental needs if we work together.

We believe that further improvement in Sharon's water use efficiency is feasible, cost-effective, environmentally responsible, and necessary for the quality and long-term sustainability of our local drinking water supply. However, high safe yield determinations would undermine future water conservation efforts. Therefore, we object to the safe yield water withdrawal limits proposed in the SWMI framework, which are far higher than current water use in the stressed Neponset and Taunton watersheds.

We recommend that safe yield determinations be assigned to an objective third party such as USGS, and that the SWMI framework be subsequently re-tooled based on truly safe and sustainable limits on water withdrawals.

Sincerely yours,

SSC Board of Directors:

Silas Fyler	Lynn Wolbarst
Nancy Fyler	Rosemary Tambouret
Ricky Stern	Paul Lauenstein